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NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

AJAX AND THE VULTURES (SOPH. *Ai.* 167-71)

In the *Classical Review* (XXVI, 4) I attempted to show that ἐπιβάντ' in 144 is merely a resumption of ἐπιβῆ in the first sentence of the parodos, and, further, that we had totally misconceived the poet's meaning in vss. 143-45.¹ I am disposed to think that we have also completely misunderstood vss. 167-71 at the very end of the parodos, in which, in the (supposed) famous simile of the αἰγυπιός, scholars have universally identified Ajax with the vulture; for, in my opinion, it is not the Salaminian hero himself, but his foes, that Sophocles intended to represent as γῦπες.

In Liddell and Scott on αἰγυπιός we find these words: "and often in the poets from Homer downwards." But certainly this should read "and *not* often"; for the word is found only four times in the *Iliad* (Π 428 repeated in P 460), and twice in the *Odyssey* (π 217, χ 302), while in the post-Homeric poets it does not occur at all, with the solitary exception of Aesch. *Ag.* 49 (τρόπον αἰγυπιῶν). In prose αἰγυπιός barely emerges. The word is glossed in Hdt. 3.76 by γυπῶν—and here αἰγυπιός is not the pursuer, but the *pursued*!

If my conception of the poet's meaning is correct, the point of the passage is lost in all the explanations hitherto offered. Sophocles is contrasting the clamors of the Danaï with the absolute silence which would ensue, if Ajax should appear. The emphasis is on παταγοῦσιν and ἄφωνοι. The verb has nothing to do with "the chatter of flocking birds," but refers to the loud uproar made by the Danaï, to their outcries against Ajax, in contradistinction to the motionless cowering and perfect silence, of the awe-struck Greeks, which would inevitably prevail, if the Salaminian hero should make his appearance. Old Strepsiades learns from Socrates that ὥσπερ βροντῇ τὸ ζωμίδιον παταγεῖ, and when clouds strike together, ῥήγνυνται καὶ παταγοῦσιν (*Nub.* 378). The clashing of shields is a πάταγος (*Ach.* 539); and the chorus of women in the *Lysistrata* speak of a θορύβον καὶ πατάγον χυτρείον (329). The noun πάταγος signifies "strepitus," such as the beating of wings, a great noise οὐχ ἑνὸς δορός (Aesch. *Sept.* 104), an ἦχος, a κτύπος, the battle din, πάταγος ἀσπίδων (Eur. *Heracl.* 832). The substantive occurs twice in Sophocles (*Ant.* 125; *Tr.* 519), the verb only in this passage. Cf. N 283, Π 769, Φ 9: ἐν δ' ἔπessον μεγάλην πατάγω; Hdt. 7.211: βοῇ τε καὶ

¹ My interpretation and emendations seem to receive additional support from the following passages: Eur. *Phoen.* 153 ff.: ἀλάστορ . . . βριθὼν . . . ἐπὶ παῖδας ἔβα; *Med.* 1333: ἀλάστορ' εἰς ἔμ' ἔσκηψαν; *Hipp.* 1382: ἔμολε τ' ἐπ' ἐμέ; Aesch. *Ag.* 1175: δαίμων ὑπερβην βαρὺς ἐμπύτνων; cf. Lucian *Char.* 3 χεϊμῶν . . . ἐμπεσών.

πατάγῃ ἐπήσαν. The πάταγος in our passage is the ζαμενὴς λόγος ἐκ Δαναῶν (138) and the μεγάλοι θόρυβοι (142). Cf. 164: ὑπὸ τοιούτων θορυβῇ. These the sailors cannot repel unaided. "Clangorem fundit uastum uultur." But if Ajax should come forth, the Greeks in abject terror would cower mute and still.

Now γῦπες are, according to Hesychius, ὄρνεα σαρκοφάγα καὶ νεκροφάγα; cf. Δ 237 χροά γῦπες ἔδονται, λ 578 γῦπε . . . ἦπαρ ἔκειρον. The word occurs in the *Rhesus* qualified by the same adjective with which it is associated (as I believe) in the *Ajax*: πετεινοῖς γυψὶ θοινατήριον (*Rhes.* 515); cf. *Androm.* 74; *Tro.* 598. In Aeschylus we find γυπῖας πέτρα (*Suppl.* 796), but not γύψ; nor does it occur in Sophocles.

What has happened, then, in these verses? Simply a breaking-up of the sentence, incorrect punctuation, as in 144. A colon was placed after ἀγέλαι and a fresh start taken at μεγάλοι γυπῶν, which was mistaken for μέγαν αἰγυπιόν—words which Sophocles certainly did not write. To secure the desired long syllable before the diaeresis, editors have resorted to all sorts of devices: Dawes adds δ', Toup. σ', Heath γ'. The participle ὑποδείσαντες has even been transferred to another part of the sentence (Seyffert), or excised as a gloss (Dobree, Bergk, Nauck, Wecklein). To secure a "but" Jebb adopts the device of Dawes. But we already have an adversative at the beginning of the sentence:

ἀλλ'—ὅτε γὰρ δὴ τὸ σὸν δμῶ' ἀπέδραν,
παταγοῦσιν ἅτε πτηνῶν ἀγέλαι
μεγάλοι γυπῶν—ὑποδείσαντες
τάχ' ἂν ἐξαίφνης, εἰ σὺ φανεῖης,
σιγῇ πτηξείαν ἀφῶνοι.

We have only to place one reading over the other to see how close the resemblance is:

μεγαλαιγυπων
μεγαναιγυπιον

In uncials Λ needs but a stroke to make Ν, while in minuscules the two letters might easily be confused in such a sentence; and ω was sometimes mistaken for ου, οι, or ιω. Moreover, the clause seemed to stop at ἀγέλαι, and as ὑποδείσαντες required an object, the metamorphosis of μεγάλοι γυπῶν into a μέγαν αἰγυπιόν was but natural. Furthermore, the adjective seems to require a substantive, for πτηνῶν of itself does not indicate that the flocks are birds; they might be griffins, bats, sphinxes, serpents, horses, arrows, or even words.

The fact is, the whole passage has been misunderstood chiefly because Ajax was thought to be the αἰγυπιός. But he is not—he is the eagle: ἔπταζον ὥστ' ὄρνιθες ὤκυν | αἰετον ἐξαπίνης φάνεντα (*Alcae. Fr.* 27). The simile ends at γυπῶν—the rest is purely metaphor, (Cf. *Pind. P.* 4.57: ἔπταξαν δ' ἀκίνητοι σιωπᾷ | ἥρωες); there is no reference (directly) to birds

of any kind. If Ajax should appear, the Greeks would cower. He is an *αἰετός*, they *ὄρνιθες*; but it is an implied, not an expressed comparison. There is no allusion to the Homeric *αἰγυπιοὶ γαμφώνυχες ἀγκυλοχεῖλαι*; and there is no ellipsis in the beginning of the sentence, as many scholars have thought.

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EMENDATION OF OLYMPIODORUS *Scholia in Platonis Phaedonem*
(Finckh, p. 39, l. 9)

“οὐ καὶ ἡ ὀνομαζομένη ἀνδρία τοῖς οὕτω.” ὀνομαζομένη, ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν. ὀνόματος γὰρ μόνου κοινού μετέχουσιν, ἡ περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα διαφερόμενοι: So the MSS. Finckh suggests “fortasse ἡ delendum.” A better remedy is to read οἱ περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα διαφερόμενοι. It is another case of *iotacism*. See *Classical Philology*, I, 81. Olympiodorus is perhaps thinking of such Platonic passages as *Sophist* 218 C: νῦν γὰρ δὴ σύ τε κἀγὼ τοῦτου πέρι τοῦνομα μόνον ἔχομεν κοινῇ· τὸ δὲ ἔργον, etc.

PAUL SHOREY

NOTE ON ARISTOTLE *Metaphysics* 1086b, 32–37

ἔτι δὲ οὐδ' ἐπιστητὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα· οὐ γὰρ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ἐπιστήμη τῶν καθόλου. δῆλον δ' ἔκ τε τῶν ἀποδείξεων καὶ τῶν ὀρισμῶν· οὐ γὰρ γίγνεται συλλογισμὸς ὅτι τόδε τὸ τρίγωνον δύο ὀρθαῖς, εἰ μὴ πᾶν τρίγωνον δύο ὀρθαῖς, οὐδ' ὅτι ὁδὶ ὁ ἀνθρώπος ζῶον εἰ μὴ πᾶς ἀνθρώπος ζῶον.

The most recent translator, Ross, renders this [*italics mine*]: “Again, the elements will not be even knowable; for they are not universal and knowledge is of universals. This is clear both from demonstrations and from definitions; for we do not conclude that this triangle has its angles equal to two right angles *unless* every triangle has its angles equal to two right angles, nor that this man is an animal *unless* every man is an animal.”

The German translator Lasson (p. 266) and all modern interpreters known to me take the passage in the same way. It is the natural interpretation, so long as we think in terms of modern logic and idiom. From the point of view of Aristotelian logic and Greek idiom it is improbable and, I believe, almost demonstrably wrong.

Note first that Aristotle does not merely say that knowledge is *derived* from universal (propositions). He says it is *of* universals, as is proved by definitions and demonstrations. Now definitions and syllogistic demonstrations are elsewhere associated in the same way: *Met.* 1039b, 27 ff.; *Analyt. Post.* 75b, 31. Their common feature is not merely that they depend upon, but that they are concerned with τὸ καθόλου, are *of* it. This is obviously so in the case of the definition. We do not define the particular or the